Another advantage of the proposal was that the Government would be saving the amount that was being spent on account of rent for the buildings hired for housing the several offices. According to the member, the rent amounted to nearly Rs. 5,000 a year. That was a heavy drain on the State finances. Further, the amount already spent for the acquisition of the site referred to above was bearing no interest for a very long time without conferring any public benefit.

The existing District and Sessions Court building was very miserable and looked like a veritable stable. It was the private residence of a retired judge before it was used as a court-house and since then very few alterations had been made. When there was a third bench in the court, it was held in the kitchen room of that building. Although the site was an excellent one situated on the top of a hill, the eaves of the building were so low as to shut out light and air. The buildings should, therefore, be dismantled before fresh buildings were erected on the site.

The courts of the District, the First Class and Second Class Magistrates were all housed in miserable buildings. They were held in small rooms without proper ventilation and so the parties had to stand on the verandahs. The Second Class Magistrate's Court was the most miserably housed of all. It was frightfully hot inside and reminded one of the Black Hole of Calcutta. There was no place in which the witnesses waiting to be examined could stand and so they were making use of the cow-shed attached to the building. The distance from the shed to the witness box being less than 10 feet, the persons standing there could hear what others in the box testified.

In view of all the above difficulties, all the public offices in Kottayam should be located on the ten acre plot already acquired by the Government and suitable and up-to-date buildings should be erected for the purpose without further delay.

DEWAN: Mr. Cheriyan K. Varghese, the Government have already decided that all the public buildings and courts of Kottayam should as far as space is available—as far as ten acres will admit—be located on that one site. The Chief Engineer has been asked to commence with the Division Cutcherry and he has been instructed to draw up a working programme so as to ensure the completion of all the buildings in four years at the latest.

64. Communications in the Todupuzha taluk.

MR. TOMMAN JOSEPH (*Member, Todupuzha taluk*) said that the Government were not bestowing adequate attention on the improvement of the means of communication in the Todupuzha taluk, in spite of repeated representations on the subject made at successive sessions of the Assembly. Judged from the point of view of communications, the Todupuzha taluk deserved a differential treatment from other taluks. There were no waterways in that taluk and therefore the only available means of communication were proper roads. Thousands of acres of land had been brought under rubber, pepper and cocoanut cultivation, and for finding proper markets for the produce, adequate transport facilities were essential. In the absence of such facilities, people were put to much inconvenience and loss. Although the taluk was one of the biggest taluks in the State, there were only 59 miles of road there, of which 13 miles were roads constructed by estate owners. Even the few roads in the taluk were not properly maintained. If the Government were to spend on public works in each taluk, amounts proportionate to the income derived from it, the Todupuzha taluk would have been in a much better condition. The Government should therefore pay greater attention to the taluk which had been long neglected in the matter of communications, and provide larger amounts annually in the budget and see that the allotted amounts were spent without being allowed to lapse.

Of the several roads that were immediately necessary, the first was a road starting from the 10th mile of the Todupuzha-Muvattupuzha road and leading to and passing along the Pakuthi Cutcherry at Kumaramangalam. The total length of the proposed road was only 6½ miles, of which 3 miles had already been finished. The remaining distance should be finished soon and adequate budget provision should be made for the purpose. The road would open up one of the crowded parts of the taluk.

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Another road urgently required was the one starting from Arakulam and connecting the Peermade road, and passing through Mayyelam saddle. The alignment should be so fixed as to afford easy access to the adjoining British parts. The amounts provided in the annual budgets for the road usually lapsed without being spent. Arrangements should be made to avoid such lapses in future and to open the road at least as far as Mayyelam saddle.

Budget provision had been made in the years 1101 and 1102 for the opening of roads from Vazhakulam to Vazhittala, from Muttam to Antinad-Melukavu road and from Kotamangalam to Vazhakulam. But the first-mentioned road had not been begun at all, while only 1½ miles of the second and half the length of the third road had been finished. It was deplorable that the budget allotments made in respect of such very useful roads were allowed to lapse. The incomplete roads should be finished without further delay and work on the other road should also be begun early.

In conclusion, the member prayed for the provision of allotments for converting the following pathways into cart roads :—

(*a*) The village road connecting the Muvattupuzha-Neduvakad road with the Kaliar road.

(*b*) The village road from Karinkunnam to Vazhittala *via* Purapuzha.

(*c*) The road joining the Arakulam road, 9th mile, and the Vellimattam road, 5th mile, and extension of the same to join the Todupuzha-Kaliar road.

The member claimed that the roads specified by him would in a great way help the opening up of the interior of the taluk.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Tomman Joseph, an estimate has been sanctioned and contract settled in regard to the road that runs from Muvattupuzha to Todupuzha and Kalavur *via* Kumaramangalam. The only difficulty is that the lands have not been formally acquired and handed over yet by the Revenue Department to the Public Works Department. That is now being expedited. The other road you refer to is the road from Vazhakulam to Vazhittala. For this an estimate has been sanctioned. The work is about to be begun. The next road you speak of is the road from Todupuzha to the British parts. The road has been aligned already and parts are under construction.

Then you speak of three new roads included in the concluding part of your representation. All these have to be investigated as to their necessity, before they can be taken up for construction.

65. Communications in the Muvattupuzha taluk.

MR. VARKI ABRAHAM (*Member, Muvattupuzha taluk*) said that what the people of North Travancore needed most was the improvement of means of communication. Most of the waste lands in the Muvattupuzha taluk had been granted on registry during recent years and consequently many parts of the taluk had become crowded with habitations. But for want of proper means of communication, people were put to much hardship and inconvenience. As a result of several representations made through the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and the Legislative Council for the construction of certain absolutely necessary roads, the Government were pleased to sanction small amounts for works in connection with some of them. But whether due to the indifference of the Public Works Department or for other reasons, many of those allotments lapsed to the Government without being spent. As instances, the member said that an allotment of Rs. 1,500 each was provided in the budget for 1101 for the Karakunnam-Mulavur and the Anchalpetti-Ramangalam roads. The amounts, however, lapsed at the end of that year, and in 1102 only a sum of Rs. 1,000 was provided for one of the two roads. Similarly, the Varapatti-Neduvakad and the Trikkariyur-Vettilapara roads provided for in the budget for 1102 had not yet been begun. Again, although a sum of Rs. 3,000 was provided in the budget for 1102 for the improvement of the Muvattupuzha-Arakuzha-Palakuzha road, no improvement worth the name was made. The work on the road had been stopped as a result of certain irregularities on the part of the local P. W. D. subordinates and consequently the people were made to suffer. In the same way, the bridge at Elanji had not been completed, although the work had been begun four

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